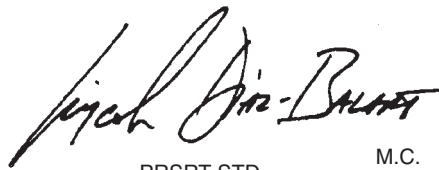


U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

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CONGRESSMAN  
**LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART**

## *Hurricane Preparedness Update*



Dear Friends,

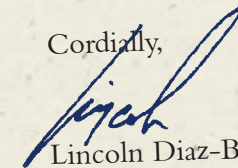
Last October, as we remember all too well, Hurricane Wilma devastated parts of southern Florida. Wilma set numerous records for both strength and destruction, and ranked as the sixth costliest storm in U.S. history. Damages in the U.S. alone were estimated at over \$12 billion.

Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland because the hazards that they bring come in many forms: storm surges, high winds, tornadoes, and flooding. It is important for you and your family to have a plan in place for all of those hazards.

Natural disasters are unpredictable. The National Hurricane Center has designated the week of May 21-27 as Hurricane Preparedness Week. I urge you to take time to think about the fact that hurricane season is once again upon us and to prepare for the months ahead.

By being aware of our vulnerability and preparing in advance, we can reduce the effects of hurricane damage. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of assistance or if there is any matter that you would like to bring to my attention. I encourage you to contact my office and to visit [www.house.gov/diaz-balart](http://www.house.gov/diaz-balart) to subscribe to my e-newsletter.

Cordially,

  
Lincoln Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



**CONGRESSMAN LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART**  
<http://diaz-balart.house.gov>

### Contacting Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart

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Congressman Lincoln  
Diaz-Balart congratulates  
Red Cross volunteers  
for their efforts in  
the aftermath of  
Hurricane Wilma.



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## Preparing for a Hurricane

- ☐ Know your community's emergency plans, warning signals, evacuation routes, and locations of emergency shelters.
- ☐ Identify potential home hazards and secure them before the hurricane strikes.
- ☐ Buy a fire extinguisher and make sure your family knows where to find it and how to use it.
- ☐ Locate and secure your important papers, such as insurance policies, wills, licenses, stocks, etc.
- ☐ Post emergency numbers near phones
- ☐ Inform local authorities about any special needs, i.e., elderly or bedridden people, or anyone with a disability.
- ☐ Make plans to ensure your pets' safety.

## Emergency Supplies You Will Need

At a minimum, your supplies should include:

- ☐ Several clean containers for water (about five gallons for each person).
- ☐ 3-5 day supply of non-perishable food.
- ☐ First aid kit.
- ☐ Battery-powered radio, flashlights, and extra batteries.
- ☐ Sleeping bags or extra blankets.
- ☐ Prescription medicines.
- ☐ Baby food and/or prepared formula, diapers, and other baby supplies.
- ☐ Disposable cleaning cloths.
- ☐ Personal hygiene supplies.
- ☐ An emergency kit for your car with food, flares, booster cables, maps, tools, a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, sleeping bags, etc.

## Preparing to Evacuate

When a hurricane watch is issued, you should:

- ☐ Fill your automobile's gas tank.
- ☐ If no vehicle is available, make arrangements with friends or family for transportation.
- ☐ Fill your clean water containers.
- ☐ Review your emergency plans and supplies.
- ☐ Tune in the radio or television for weather updates.
- ☐ Listen for disaster sirens and warning signals.
- ☐ Secure any items outside which may damage property in a storm, such as bicycles, grills, propane tanks, etc.
- ☐ Cover windows and doors with plywood or boards or place large strips of masking tape or adhesive tape on the windows to reduce the risk of breakage and flying glass.
- ☐ Put family pets in a safe area. Emergency shelters cannot accept animals.
- ☐ Place vehicles under cover, if at all possible.
- ☐ Fill sinks and bathtubs with water as an extra supply for washing.
- ☐ Adjust the thermostat on refrigerators and freezers to the coolest possible temperature.

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## If You are Ordered to Evacuate

- ☐ Take only essential items with you.
- ☐ If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity, and water.
- ☐ Disconnect appliances to reduce the likelihood of electrical shock when power is restored.
- ☐ Follow the designated evacuation routes-others may be blocked-and expect heavy traffic.

## If You Are Ordered NOT to Evacuate

The great majority of injuries during a hurricane are cuts caused by flying glass or other debris. To get through the storm in the safest possible manner:

- ☐ Monitor the radio or television for weather conditions, if possible.
- ☐ Stay indoors until the authorities declare the storm is over.
- ☐ Do not go outside, even if the weather appears to have calmed.
- ☐ Stay away from all windows and exterior doors, seeking shelter in a bathroom or basement.
- ☐ Prepare to evacuate to a shelter or to a neighbor's home if your home is damaged, or if you are instructed to do so by emergency personnel.

Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart  
discussing the importance of  
emergency preparedness with  
relief workers.



## Important Numbers for Hurricane Preparedness

### By phone:

Florida Division of  
Emergency Management  
(850) 413-9900  
Federal Emergency Management  
Agency (FEMA)  
1-800-621-FEMA (1-800-621-3362)  
American Red Cross  
(305) 644-1200  
Miami-Dade County Emergency  
Management  
(305) 468-5400  
Broward County Emergency  
Managemen  
(954) 831-3900  
Ready.gov  
1-800-BE-READY

### Or on the Web:

Federal Emergency Management  
Agency (FEMA)  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)  
American Red Cross  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)  
Ready.gov  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)  
Florida Division of  
Emergency Management  
[www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)  
National Hurricane Center  
[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)